

June 17, 1953
Situation Report from Vladimir Semyonov and Andrei Grechko to Vyacheslav Molotov and Nikolai Bulganin, 11:15 a.m.

Citation:

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Summary:

The current state of protests in East Germany, the number of people on strike, the presence of American soldiers and Soviet measures to dispel the protesters. They considered there was a possibility that the participants of a solidarity demonstration announced in West Berlin attempted to cross to East Berlin which might increase the danger.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

- English Translation

THE OPERATIONS DIVISION, THE MAIN OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATION

THE GENERAL STAFF OF THE SOVIET ARMY

Top Secret

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To Comrade V.M. MOLOTOV

To Comrade N.A. BULGANIN

Today, the morning of 17 June, some plants are on strike in East Berlin, including the large plants of the Soviet State-Stock Company and the national enterprises. The workers of the construction companies have also not come to work. The striking workers went to Strausberger Platz, which was arranged by the organizers of the disorders to be the place of the meeting.

By 8 a.m., some 30 enterprises, with a workforce of up to 25,000 people, were on strike. There are about 15,000 to 20,000 people in the streets. The speeches of the demonstrators are running under the same slogans as they were put forward yesterday. The demand to decrease the prices by 20 percent in retail shops is strongly emphasized.

The measures undertaken by the German police failed to disperse the demonstrators. Soviet military patrols run throughout the city. Two companies of armored personnel carriers are patrolling near the building that houses the SED CC and the government.

An American vehicle with two uniformed American officers in it, calling on the demonstrators to go to West Berlin was noticed.

The organization of a solidarity demonstration was announced in West Berlin. There is a possibility that those demonstrators will attempt to penetrate East Berlin from West Berlin, which may increase the disturbances.

The first columns of the eastern demonstrators came to the building occupied by the GDR government at 8:30 a.m. The demonstrators were pushed back by the German police. Gathering in the ruins of houses, they started throwing stones at the police.

The workers on strike at the cable factory demanded from the guards of the plant to hand over their arms. The workers of that plant demand a withdrawal of the German police and the Soviet forces from East Berlin.

The strike is expanding, drawing in new, large enterprises. The workers of those plants usually leave work and go out to join the demonstration.

There have been instances where demonstrators have provoked the Soviet patrols at Stalinallee.

We will report on further events.

SEMYONOV

GRECHKO

11:15. a.m., 17 June 1953